

We claim:

1. A blow out preventer for operating between a spear of a tubular gripping
5 tool and a tubular gripped by the tool, the blow out preventer comprising:
an expandable seal carried on the spear and expandable to seal between the
spear and the tubular's inner wall, the expandable seal being operable as a
back up to a primary seal operable between the spear and the tubular's
inner wall.
- 10 2. The blow out preventer of claim 1 wherein the expandable seal is a passive
seal operable by pressure differential about the seal.
2. The blow out preventer of claim 2 wherein the expandable seal is a seal
cup.
3. The blow out preventer of claim 2 wherein the expandable seal is
15 positioned in a backup position on the spear relative to the primary seal.
4. The blow out preventer of claim 1 wherein the expandable seal is
selectively operable by other than normal operational fluid pressure in the
tubular to create a seal between the spear and the tubular's inner wall.
5. The blow out preventer of claim 5 further comprising a drive system to
20 expand the expandable seal.
6. The blow out preventer of claim 5 wherein the drive system includes
hydraulics.
7. The blow out preventer of claim 5 wherein the expandable seal is
extrudable by pressure applied by a drive system.
- 25 8. A tubular gripping clamp for gripping an oilfield tubular, the tubular
gripping clamp comprising: a spear sized to extend into the bore of a
tubular to be gripped, gripping means drivable to engage the tubular to be
gripped and a primary seal about the spear to create a seal between the
spear and the inner wall of the tubular, the primary seal being expandable
30 in response to at least operationally generated fluid pressure differential in

the tubular, and a secondary seal about the spear selectively operable to create a seal between the spear and the inner wall of the tubular.

9. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 9 wherein the clamp is an external-type clamp.
- 5 10. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 9 wherein the clamp is an internal-type clamp.
11. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 9 wherein the expandable seal is selectively operable by other than normal operational fluid pressure in the tubular to create a seal between the spear and the tubular's inner wall.
- 10 12. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 12 further comprising a drive system to expand the secondary seal.
13. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 12 wherein the secondary seal is extrudable by pressure applied by a drive system.
14. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 12 wherein the drive system includes
15 a feature operable based on hydraulics.
15. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 15 further comprising a mud flow path through the spear and hydraulic pressure from the mud flow path acts on the drive system.
16. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 15 further comprising a mud flow
20 path through the spear, a fluid communication conduit to communicate fluid pressure from the mud flow path and the drive system and a control for creating a hydraulic pressure in the mud flow path capable of actuating the drive system to expand the secondary seal.
17. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 15 wherein hydraulic pressure
25 independent from a mud flow path through the spear is used to operate the drive system.
18. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 9 further comprising a mud flow path through the spear and a hydraulically actuated drive system for causing expansion of the secondary seal, the drive system including a valve in the
30 mud flow path sealable to create fluid pressure in the mud flow path sufficient to actuate the drive system.

19. The tubular gripping clamp of claim 19 wherein the valve includes a seat sealable by a launchable device sealable on the seat.
20. A blow out preventer assembly for operating between a tubular gripping tool and a tubular gripped by the tool, the blow out preventer assembly comprising: an expandable seal carried on the tubular gripping tool and expandable to seal between the tool and the tubular's inner wall and a drive system for selectively driving the expansion of the expandable seal.
21. The blow out preventer assembly of claim 21 wherein the drive system is a hydraulic drive system.
22. The blow out preventer assembly of claim 22 wherein the hydraulic drive system is operable by drilling mud.
23. The blow out preventer assembly of claim 22 wherein the hydraulic drive system operates based on hydraulic pressure from a mud flow path through the tool.
24. The blow out preventer assembly of claim 22 wherein hydraulic pressure independent from a mud flow path through the tool is used to operate the drive system.
25. The blow out preventer assembly of claim 22 wherein mud pressure is used to inflate the seal.
26. The blow out preventer assembly of claim 22 wherein the expandable seal includes an extrudable ring packer and the hydraulic drive system includes a fixed retainer ring on one side of the ring packer and a piston ring on the opposite side of the ring packer.
27. The blow out preventer assembly of claim 27 wherein the piston ring is secured by a shear pin selected to shear, to permit movement of the piston ring, at fluid pressures in excess of a selected fluid pressure.
28. The blow out preventer assembly of claim 27 further comprising a ratchet arrangement to lock the piston ring in its position causing expansion of the
29. A method for shutting in a well while a tubular gripping tool remains positioned in the upper end of a tubular string extending into the well, the method comprising: providing an expandable seal about a spear of the

tubular gripping tool that can be expanded selectively to seal between the spear and the inner diameter of a tubular and selectively expanding the seal to shut in the well.

- 5 30. The method of claim 29 wherein the seal is selectively expanded as a back up to a primary passive seal on the spear.
31. The method of claim 29 wherein the seal is selectively expanded after a primary passive seal on the spear has failed.
32. The method of claim 29 wherein the seal is selectively expanded during a well incident when an attempt to remove the tubular gripping tool from an
10 end of a tubular has failed.
33. The method of claim 29 wherein the expandable seal can be expanded selectively by hydraulics.
34. The method of claim 29 further comprising increasing fluid pressure in a mud flow path through the tool to selectively expand the seal.
- 15 35. The method of claim 34 wherein a sealing device is launched through the mud flow path to seal against a seat in the mud flow path to cause an increase in fluid pressure.
36. The method of claim 29 further comprising applying fluid pressure through passages apart from a mud flow path to selectively expand the
20 seal.